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ABSTRACT

To help New Jersey parents and other citizens increase their involvement in schools, this handbook describes school-site management, a form of decentralized administration that can help broaden effective citizen participation in educational management. Part 1 first defines school-site (or school-based) management--a type of school governance in which decision-making at the school building level is shared by the principal, teachers, and parents--and then discusses the reasons for implementing school-site management. In part 2 the author presents case studies of three states (Florida, California, and South Carolina) that require certain forms of school-site management and of two school districts, in Salt Lake City (Utah) and Eugene (Oregon), that have implemented demonstration projects involving school-based management. Part 3 discusses the legal feasibility of school-site management under New Jersey law and suggests 10 steps for parents and others to take to implement school-based management. The document concludes with a list of information sources on school-site management, legal issues, and the case studies. (Author/RW)

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INTRODUCING SCHOOL SITE MANAGEMENT: A FRAMEWORK FOR CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

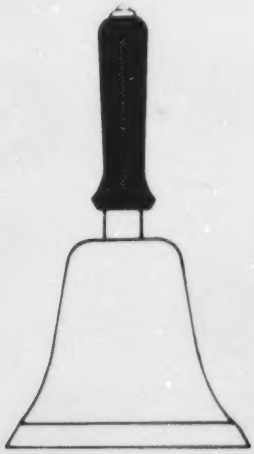

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	ii
PART I	
SCHOOL SITE MANAGEMENT - WHAT IS IT?	1
WHY SCHOOL SITE MANAGEMENT? (A RATIONALE)	11
PART II	
WHERE IT'S HAPPENING NOW	17
FLORIDA: SCHOOL BASED MANAGEMENT	18
CALIFORNIA: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM	27
SOUTH CAROLINA: SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCILS	33
NCCE DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS	35
PART III	
CAN IT HAPPEN IN NEW JERSEY? (YES)	39
WHAT CITIZENS CAN DO	45
SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT SCHOOL SITE MANAGEMENT	59

INTRODUCTION

The public school system in the 1970's has been besieged by citizen demands for accountability and for a return to teaching the "basic skills." This widespread attention to education has resulted in a trend toward increased citizen involvement in the schools.

The benefits of citizen involvement are twofold. First, parents have primary interest in their childrens' education; if given the chance they will try to influence the school system so that it serves their children as best it can. Second, once they are allowed to participate in making educational decisions, parents' contributions can be invaluable, and their demands for quality can result in better schools.

Although citizen involvement is in its infant stages, it is a force to which schoolpeople must adapt. The first step in the adaptation process is to accept the concept of citizen participation in educational decision making. The second step is to develop a framework through which that involvement can take place reasonably.

One possible framework is a decentralized management system known most commonly as School Site Management. This handbook is about School Site Management. In Part I, the system is defined in some detail. The definition given is a composite of the best features of school site management, as they have been tried in various school districts. These features appear to increase the possibilities for effective citizen participation, and to remove the barriers to it.

Case studies of the implementation of school site management in three states and in several school districts are presented in Part II. The legal feasibility of implementing school site management in New Jersey is explored in the first section of Part III. The second section of Part III outlines the steps to be taken by citizens who want to start a discussion about school site management in their school districts.

This handbook is designed so that each of the three parts can be used as a separate instructional unit: Part I defines the decentralized management system, Part II shows how it has been applied elsewhere, and Part III serves as a guide for applying it. A "Sources of Information" section in the back lists articles and booklets, organizations and laws which will provide information to the reader who may want to study school site management in more detail.

PART I

SCHOOL SITE MANAGEMENT - WHAT IS IT?

SCHOOL SITE MANAGEMENT IS A TYPE OF SCHOOL GOVERNANCE IN WHICH DECISION MAKING IS SHARED BY THE PRINCIPAL, TEACHERS AND PARENTS AT THE SCHOOL BUILDING LEVEL. THE SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL IS THE PRIMARY FORUM FOR SHARED DECISION MAKING ABOUT THE SCHOOL'S INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM, SCHOOL OPERATING POLICIES, PERSONNEL SELECTION AND THE EXPENDITURE OF "DISCRETIONARY FUNDS," WHICH ARE FUNDS NOT ALREADY ALLOCATED FOR ONGOING COSTS AND SALARIES.

SCHOOL SITE MANAGEMENT PROVIDES FOR OPERATIONAL FLEXIBILITY IN PROGRAM AND BUDGETING DECISIONS. THIS MEANS THAT THE SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL CAN DISTRIBUTE DISCRETIONARY FUNDS TO DIFFERENT PROGRAMS, DIFFERENT TYPES OF PERSONNEL, OR PURCHASES OF EQUIPMENT AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS, DEPENDING ON THE PROGRAMS AND POLICIES WHICH THE COUNCIL PLANS EACH YEAR.

The most important difference between school site management and the more traditional way of running schools is that policy and budgeting decisions are made at the school building level rather than by the school board or the central administration of the school district.

This alternative form of school governance provides the principal with increased responsibilities and authority, and gives parents and teachers the right to participate in important school decisions. This structure for participatory or shared decision making does not now exist in most school districts.

THE SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL

THE SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF SCHOOL SITE MANAGEMENT.

Usually, the council is made up of an equal number of parents and schoolpeople. Council members select a chairperson. School representatives include the building principal, several teachers and other support staff (perhaps the guidance counselor or an assistant principal). Teachers should make up a majority of schoolpeople on the council.

Parent representatives may be elected by the parents in a school building. Parents should not be appointed by the principal or school district superintendent, because they often do not represent all parents' interests if they are appointed. They and their spouses should not be employed by the school district, because they might have difficulty making independent decisions.

RESPONSIBILITIES. The responsibilities of the school site council must be clearly differentiated from the responsibilities of the district's school board.* In most cases, the school board and central administration of the district will retain broad budgetary responsibilities, the authority to monitor schools and programs, and the authority to test pupils.

THE SCHOOL SITE COUNCILS WILL BE AUTHORIZED TO ASSESS STUDENT AND COMMUNITY NEEDS, SET GOALS AND OBJECTIVES, SPEND DISCRETIONARY FUNDS, AND PLAN AND EVALUATE SCHOOL PROGRAMS.

The specific responsibilities of the school board, the superintendent, the principal and the school site council must be stated as clearly

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*The legality of school board delegation of responsibilities will be discussed in another section.

as possible so that there are no questions about roles or individual tasks. The recording of specific responsibilities will also make clear who is accountable for different school activities.

METHODS. There are two major methods by which the school site council operates. The first method is shared decision making. Through shared decision making parents, teachers and the building principal jointly develop pland and make judgments about programs, policies and fund expenditures. The council must also identify problems and propose alternative solutions to them. Decisions are made by the council only after the concerns and interests of all groups represented on the council have been heard and discussed.

THE MOST IMPORTANT POINT IS THAT EACH MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL, INCLUDING THE PRINCIPAL, HAS ONE VOTE IN THE FINAL DECISION. NO INDIVIDUAL MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL HAS THE AUTHORITY TO VETO THE GROUP'S DECISION.

CHARACTERISTICS OF COUNCIL SUCCESS

- MUTUAL RESPECT AND TRUST AMONG MEMBERS.
- PRIORITY SETTING.
- CONFIDENCE IN GROUP DECISION MAKING ABILITY.
- TOLERANCE FOR DIVERSITY.
- RESPECT FOR COMPETENCE OF TEACHERS.
- EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM.
- REALISTIC PROJECTS.
- INDIVIDUAL SELF-CONFIDENCE.

Once decisions have been made, the principal implements them. Since he or she is accountable to the school district administration and to the school site council, the principal must have the authority to perform assigned responsibilities within government regulations and in accordance with the council's policies.

One of the first tasks of a newly organized school site council is to define the decision making procedures it will follow. It might, for example, set up a procedure by which problems and issues are introduced, discussed and resolved. This could require a public hearing on the issue, a fact finding sub-committee on a problem, or a unanimous vote on certain types of decisions.

A second method used by school site councils is comprehensive and continuous planning. Planning is defined as the development of goals, activities and procedures, and the detailed preparation of a program or strategy for action. The school site council should be able to anticipate the need for changes in programs and in fund expenditures, and it should be able to initiate change.

PLANNING.* For what activities does the school site council make decisions and plan? The council may plan and make decisions about a number of important school activities, which occur under the broad categories of instructional program, school operations and budgeting.

1) The first step in planning is to set goals. In schools, goals should indicate what student outcomes are expected from the school program. These student outcomes may be what the school site council believes are most important for children to know, to understand, or to be able to

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*Planning may take many forms. There are several very good planning books available. A particularly good one for parents is California's "Planning Handbook." See the reference for this in the "Sources of Information" section.

DECISION MAKING FOR SCHOOL SITE COUNCILS

A. PREPARATION

1. READ THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING BEFORE THE NEXT ONE.
2. KNOW CLEARLY WHAT PROBLEMS OR ITEMS YOU WANT TO PUT ON THE AGENDA.
3. BRING ALL MATERIALS NEEDED.

B. BEHAVIOR IN THE MEETING

1. BE SURE TO SUBMIT YOUR ITEMS FOR THE AGENDA. STATE THEM VERY BRIEFLY; DO NOT ELABORATE.
2. WHEN YOU HAVE AN OPINION OR FEELING, STATE IT HONESTLY AND CLEARLY.
3. STAY ON THE AGENDA ITEM BEING DISCUSSED AND HELP OTHERS STAY ON IT.
4. WHEN YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND SOMETHING, ASK FOR CLARIFICATION.
5. PARTICIPATE ACTIVELY; WHEN YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY, SAY IT.
6. BECAUSE IT IS YOUR MEETING, TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR DOING THINGS THAT WILL HELP THE GROUP FUNCTION EFFECTIVELY:
   - A. STARTING ON TIME.
   - B. GETTING THE AGENDA SET.
   - C. STAYING ON THE SUBJECT.
   - D. KEEPING ORDER.
   - E. LISTENING TO OTHERS.
   - F. KEEPING RECORDS.
   - G. GETTING THINGS DISCUSSED.
   - H. ARRIVING AT DECISIONS.
   - I. QUITTING ON TIME.
7. PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS TO HAVE THEIR OPINIONS OR FEELINGS HEARD; ENCOURAGE SILENT MEMBERS TO SPEAK UP.
8. LISTEN ATTENTIVELY TO OTHERS; CLARIFY WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING WHEN IT IS NECESSARY.
9. TRY TO THINK CREATIVELY ABOUT SOLUTIONS THAT MIGHT RESOLVE CONFLICTS; TRY THEM OUT ON THE GROUP.
10. KEEP NOTES ON THINGS YOU AGREE TO DO AFTER THE MEETING.

(CONTINUED)

DECISION MAKING FOR SCHOOL SITE COUNCILS (CONT.)

11. At all times, keep saying to yourself, "What would help this group move ahead and get this problem solved? What contribution can I make to help this group function more effectively? What does the group need? How can I help?"

C. AFTER THE MEETING

1. Carry out your assignments and commitments.
2. Pass on to your constituents decisions or information that they should be informed about.
3. Do not repeat statements or activities which might reflect poorly on a member.
4. Refrain from complaining about a decision on which the group agreed.

- Source: ESTABLISHING SCHOOL SITE COUNCILS
California State Department of Education

do. Some examples of student outcome goals are:

- students will be able to communicate well with other people.
- students will develop grade-level reading and writing skills.
- students will learn about and appreciate the cultures and life-styles of different ethnic groups.

2) The next step is to assess the needs of students. The council can do this by collecting information about achievement, program effectiveness, use of resources and school facilities, the staff and the community. The council can analyze and evaluate this collected information to determine how well the school program is actually accomplishing,

or will be able to accomplish, the goals set forth in step one.

3) Once student needs have been identified, the council will develop objectives, which may be viewed as steps to accomplish on the way to achieving a goal. Usually, objectives are written expectations or standards for student performance, which specify who will be able to do what, and how it will happen. For example, the council may write: "Students will be able to write a letter requesting information about the climate in Alaska."

4) The existing school program may be inappropriate, or more likely, inadequate. The council must then develop a program, which may be a revised instructional program, or alternative strategies for improving the existing school program. Council members can plan curriculum and materials changes, and teacher representatives on the council can act as resources in a discussion of instructional methods and their relation to materials.

THE PLANNING OF A SCHOOL PROGRAM IS PROBABLY ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT TASKS OF A SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL. THE TYPE OF PROGRAM ADOPTED WILL DICTATE HOW DISCRETIONARY FUNDS ARE SPENT, THE SKILLS AND NUMBER OF SUPPORT PERSONNEL THE SCHOOL WILL NEED, THE TYPES OF TEXTBOOKS, MATERIALS OR EQUIPMENT TO BE PURCHASED, AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH STUDENTS WILL LEARN IN SCHOOL.

5) This program must then be implemented, with the specific objectives as short-term activities and the goals as long-term results. The principal is responsible for making sure the program is implemented in the way the school site council intended it to be. The teachers are responsible for instructing and guiding the students toward the planned goals and objectives.

6) The program must finally be evaluated to determine if it is effective. In some cases, the council might decide to use a portion of its discretionary funds to contract with an outside evaluator who will review and assess the school program in relation to stated goals and objectives. Or the council could appoint a special task group of parents and teachers to review programs. No matter which method is used, the council should carefully review its programs on a continuous basis, monitor their implementation, and be sensitive to future needs.*

PROPOSED SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

- REVIEW COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT'S EVALUATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT.
- DEVELOP SCHOOL'S ANNUAL REPORT.
- CONTRIBUTE TO DEVELOPMENT OF DISTRICT'S ANNUAL REPORT.
- SELECT/ADVISE PRINCIPAL.
- APPOINT LEGISLATIVE SUBCOMMITTEE TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT EDUCATION LEGISLATION AND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICIES.
- ESTABLISH PROGRAM PRIORITIES.
- PROPOSE INCENTIVE SYSTEMS FOR SAVING MONEY AND ENERGY.
- ESTABLISH CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF SCHOOL STAFF.
- REVIEW INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS IN USE.

*In New Jersey, the Public School Education Act of 1975 requires local school districts to 1) develop goals, 2) write objectives, 3) assess student needs, 4) install educational programs, and 5) evaluate those programs. This process for school districts in New Jersey is very similar to the planning process described here for school site councils.

BUDGETING. In most school districts, the proportion of the annual budget used for salaries of all school personnel is 80% to 85%. The remainder of the money is discretionary, to be used for supplies, equipment, materials and textbooks, and building maintenance. The distribution of such discretionary funds, which can total thousands of dollars, can be crucial in a school system.

Currently, the school board and superintendent are responsible for the distribution of discretionary funds to the schools in the district. The superintendent usually asks each building principal to submit a budget request specifying the amount of money needed for the next school year, and a breakdown of how it will be spent. In some schools, the principal asks the teachers to list the supplies and materials they will be needing. The superintendent then considers each school's budget request and distributes the funds based on some predetermined standard.

This method of budget allocation changes significantly under school site management, where the money is distributed to schools in lump sums based on some equitable formula. The most commonly used is student enrollment with more money for schools with large numbers of poor students or children requiring special education programs. Although the central administration could specify strict accounting and reporting procedures, decisions about how to spend the money would be made jointly by the principal, parents and teachers on the school site council.

THE CRUCIAL DIFFERENCE HERE IS THAT DECISIONS ABOUT HOW THE MONEY WILL BE SPENT ARE MADE BY THE PEOPLE CLOSEST TO THE STUDENTS, THOSE WHO WORK AND LIVE WITH THEM DAILY. THIS PROXIMITY TO AND UNDERSTANDING OF STUDENT NEEDS IS AT THE CRUX OF SCHOOL SITE MANAGEMENT.

"THE SECOND STEP OF THE PROCESS, BUDGETING AT THE SCHOOL SITE, WOULD BE MORE COMPLEX THAN AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL. TWO BUDGET FORMATS WOULD BE NEEDED TO OBTAIN THE BEST USE OF FUNDS WITHIN A SCHOOL. FIRST, TO INSURE THAT FUNDS WOULD BE SPENT PROPERLY, THE SCHOOL WOULD NEED A SIMPLE LINE-ITEM OR OBJECT BUDGET THAT WOULD INDICATE HOW FUNDS RECEIVED BY THE SCHOOL WERE ACTUALLY SPENT. BOTH STATE AND DISTRICT REGULATIONS REQUIRE SUCH INFORMATION TO PROTECT AGAINST THE MISAPPROPRIATION OF PUBLIC FUNDS.

IN ADDITION, A SECOND BUDGET FORMAT -- A WORK-FLOW BUDGET THAT MEASURES HOW STUDENTS ARE PROGRESSING THROUGH A COURSE OR SERIES OF COURSES TOWARD SOME DEFINED OBJECTIVE -- WOULD BE NEEDED. FOR EXAMPLE, IF IMPROVING READING SKILLS IS THE GOAL, THEN INFORMATION WOULD BE COLLECTED SHOWING EACH STUDENT'S PROGRESS THROUGH THE READING CURRICULUM. WORK-FLOW BUDGETS SHOWING THE COST OF MOVING STUDENTS FROM ONE LEVEL OF READING SKILL TO ANOTHER WOULD ENABLE PARENTS AND TEACHERS TO DECIDE WHEN AND WHERE TO SPEND RESOURCES IN THE READING PROGRAM."

- LARRY PIERCE
IN SCHOOL SITE MANAGEMENT

15

WHY SCHOOL SITE MANAGEMENT? (A RATIONALE)

The school site management movement was initiated in Florida in 1971, at the recommendation of the Governor's Citizens' Committee on Education. The committee had been charged with identifying ways to improve public schools in the state. Its recommendations were the outgrowth of a set of principles on which committee members agreed after lengthy consideration of the purposes of schooling. These principles are:

1) FUNDS SHOULD BE ALLOCATED TO SCHOOLS BASED ON NEEDS OF CHILDREN IN SCHOOLS.
2) DECISIONS ON HOW FUNDS FOR INSTRUCTION ARE TO BE SPENT SHOULD BE MADE IN THE SCHOOL CENTER.
3) SPECIFIC EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES FOR A SCHOOL SHOULD BE SET BY PEOPLE ASSOCIATED WITH THE SCHOOLS.
4) ORGANIZATION OF INSTRUCTION SHOULD BE DETERMINED AT THE SCHOOL LEVEL.
5) PARENTS SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN SCHOOL DECISION MAKING.

The major rationale for these principles is that <u>schools should respond directly to consumer demands</u>. Translated from economic terms, this means that parents and other citizens who pay for the education of the community's children are considered consumers of education. Their children are considered the beneficiaries of education.

When parents are disappointed in the quality or content of the education their children receive, they should be able to demand that changes be made, and they should call for more accountability among schoolpeople. They should participate in the planning and decision

"THE MOST IMPORTANT CONTACT BETWEEN SCHOOL PERSONNEL AND FAMILIES TAKES PLACE NOT AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL, BUT AT THE SCHOOL SITE. PARENTS AND STUDENTS ARE MORE INTERESTED IN THEIR PARTICULAR SCHOOL THAN IN THE DISTRICT, AND CONSEQUENTLY, THEY ARE MORE LIKELY TO BECOME INVOLVED AT THE SCHOOL SITE. FURTHERMORE, BY DIVIDING DISTRICTS INTO SCHOOL UNITS, THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARENT PARTICIPATION ARE INCREASED, WHILE THE SCOPE OF EDUCATION PROBLEMS CONSIDERED AND THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE INVOLVED AT ANY ONE MEETING ARE REDUCED. THIS MAKES IT EASIER TO RESPOND TO PARENT PREFERENCES...;

LIKEWISE, IT INCREASES THE CHANCE OF ANY ONE PARENT TO INFLUENCE SCHOOL POLICY. FINALLY, SCHOOL SITE MANAGEMENT GIVES THOSE EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS MOST FAMILIAR WITH A STUDENT'S PROBLEMS -- THE PRINCIPAL AND TEACHERS -- GREATER RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN. SINCE THE EDUCATION NEEDS OF CHILDREN WITHIN A SCHOOL AND BETWEEN SCHOOLS ARE NOT ALWAYS THE SAME, THE PRINCIPAL AND TEACHERS IN A SCHOOL ARE IN THE BEST POSITION TO RESPOND TO THOSE DIFFERENCES."

- LARRY PIERCE
IN SCHOOL SITE MANAGEMENT

17

making that produce the outcomes of schooling.

THEY CAN PARTICIPATE EFFECTIVELY, AND ARE MORE LIKELY TO DO SO, IF THE PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING TAKE PLACE IN THEIR LOCAL SCHOOL BUILDINGS. WITH SCHOOL SITE MANAGEMENT, THE SCHOOL PROGRAM BECOMES "OURS" RATHER THAN "THEIRS."

AS MORE CONTROL IS GIVEN TO THE SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY THROUGH THE SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL, PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN THE SCHOOLS INCREASES, PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION AND SOLVING BECOMES MORE TIMELY AND ACCURATE, AND THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE MET.

A second major rationale is that principals and teachers should have more control over school operations, particularly the instructional program.

The principal has always had an important influence on the success of school operations. Under school site management, the principal has the expanded opportunity to provide educational leadership, technical assistance, and guidance in the management of the school.

AS THE RECOGNIZED MANAGER OF THE SCHOOL SITE, THE PRINCIPAL IS RESPONSIBLE FOR CARRYING OUT DECISIONS MADE COLLECTIVELY BY THE SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL, ON WHICH HE OR SHE IS A MEMBER. THE PRINCIPAL CARRIES OUT PROGRAM PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION. HE OR SHE MANAGES PERSONNEL AND THE BUDGET.

Teachers also have a strengthened role. While teachers have seldom had a significant influence on policies and plans for the school program, their representation on school site councils allows them equal voting power, and greater control over school programs and policies.

The school site council can be in an excellent position to resolve some of the management and policy issues which affect teachers, such as class size, teacher evaluation, and transfer procedures. This activity reduces pressure on the district school board when it negotiates terms and conditions of employment with the teachers union.*

Finally, as parents, principals and teachers become the primary decision makers for school activities, the students will benefit. Instructional programs will be planned to meet student needs. The school site council will be able to change policies and programs more easily, if necessary.

Schools will not be locked into using inappropriate or outmoded curricula and materials, because the principal, parents and teachers will have the power to purchase new or better materials if the budget is sufficient, and to adopt more appropriate curricula. Resistance to change will decrease because those who design the programs will be continually reviewing and assessing them; the mandate for change will be recognized from within rather than imposed from without.

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*Although teachers unions across the country have been increasingly able to negotiate management and policy issues, a recent decision by the New Jersey Supreme Court (in Ridgefield Park Education Association vs. Ridgefield Park Board of Education, August 2, 1978) prohibits bargaining over these issues. The court ruled that school boards may only bargain with a teachers union over "terms and conditions" of employment, which include salaries, fringe benefits, vacation and sick leave, and certain procedures for evaluation.

Policy and management issues, which are referred to as "permissive" matters for negotiation, include teacher transfers and assignments, class size, criteria for teacher evaluation, etc. The court argued that school boards may not bargain over management prerogatives on matters concerning public policy. The court also asserted that matters of public policy must be determined at a public forum, with citizen participation, and not behind closed doors at the bargaining table. These types of issues could be decided, however, by school site councils, which represent all interest groups, and which should operate openly and responsively.

"IF IT IS TO BE PART OF THE COMMUNITY, THE SCHOOL HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE CULTURAL CRITICISM THE BASIS OF ITS CURRICULUM AND ITS INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM. SCHOOL-COMMUNITY LINKAGES ARE NECESSARY AND MUST BE USED AS THE BASIS FOR CONDUCTING, WITH STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY PEOPLE, A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THEIR LIVES...AND THEIR EXISTENCE."

- ALEX MOLNAR
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

"MUCH OF THE ARGUMENT FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION IS FRAMED AROUND AN IDEOLOGICAL COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRACY. THERE IS A BELIEF THAT INDIVIDUALS SHOULD ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR DECISION MAKING IN INSTITUTIONS THAT AFFECT THEIR LIVES ON A DAY-TO-DAY BASIS...HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IS CLOSELY TIED TO THE ABILITY OF PEOPLE TO ACTUALLY PARTICIPATE IN THEIR COMMUNITY LIFE."

- THOMAS POPKEWITZ
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

"THE DATA SHOWS PRETTY CLEARLY THAT THE LARGEST SINGLE UNIT FOR EFFECTIVE CHANGE IS THE SCHOOL BUILDING. PUBLIC POLLS, FOR EXAMPLE, INDICATE THAT ALTHOUGH PEOPLE DO NOT GENERALLY HAVE CONFIDENCE IN EDUCATION, THEY BECOME ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THEIR LOCAL SCHOOL.

CITIZENS ARE MOST INTERESTED IN INVOLVEMENT IN THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROCESS AND PARTICIPATION IN BUDGETING, AS IT IS TRANSLATED INTO PROGRAMS. THEY IDENTIFY MOST WITH THEIR ROLE AS PARENTS.

BUT AS PARENTS, THEY ARE BECOMING AWARE THAT THEY ARE POWERLESS, AND THAT DECISIONS ARE BEING MADE OVER WHICH THEY HAVE NO CONTROL."

- WES APKER
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE
BOARDS OF EDUCATION

21

PART II

WHERE IT'S HAPPENING NOW

Different forms of school site management are being implemented in Florida, California and South Carolina, and also in a number of school districts across the country. In Florida and California, the legislatures have required decentralized management, shared decision making and community involvement in shared decision making. In South Carolina, school advisory councils are required by law.

In other states the National Committee for Citizens in Education (NCCE) selected six districts to participate in demonstration projects in 1978, in order to study school site management. NCCE has requested additional funds to provide training and technical assistance to help these districts move toward a full site management operation.

The experiences in the three states and in the demonstration projects provide valuable insights into how school site management can work. In Part II, these experiences are summarized in order to provide the reader with a general understanding of school site management — where it's happening now.

FLORIDA: SCHOOL BASED MANAGEMENT*

THE FLORIDA GOVERNOR'S CITIZENS' COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION SUBMITTED ITS FINAL REPORT IN 1971, AND BY 1973 TWO IMPORTANT CHANGES WERE BEING MADE IN THE STATE. THE FIRST WAS A DEMONSTRATION PROJECT IN SCHOOL BASED MANAGEMENT. THE SECOND WAS THE APPROVAL BY THE FLORIDA STATE LEGISLATURE OF A SERIES OF LAWS WHICH REQUIRED THE ADOPTION OF MANY OF THE CITIZENS' COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS. THE LAWS CALL FOR SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY AND PLANNING, AN ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT, SCHOOL ADVISORY COMMITTEES, SCHOOL FINANCE REFORM AND A COMPREHENSIVE DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.

Monroe County Demonstration Project**

The first demonstration project was in Monroe County. According to Monroe County school superintendent Armando Henriquez, the demonstration project was implemented in stages over a six year period, starting in 1971-72. The project is discussed here because the implementation procedure was very logical and realistic. The involvement of parents was minimal, however, so they played a minor role in the district's school site management experiment.

At a conference on school site management sponsored by the National Committee for Citizens in Education (NCCE) in September, 1978, Dr. Henriquez summed up his district's implementation process. The first step during 1971-72 was the training of principals and central office staff in team communications, problem solving and decision making. In these first stages of implementation, the importance of developing an effective transition process from a centralized to a decentralized

*School based management is an alternative term for school site management.

**In Florida, each of the 67 counties is a school district.

management system was stressed. School site management requires a decentralized system, which means that power to make many decisions is at the school building level rather than in the central office.

Training sessions were conducted on the development of work group skills, and a "colleague theory of organization." The characteristics of this theory are a focus on tasks and organizational objectives, initiative by all members, change strategies, conflict management and flexibility.

The second step began in the summer, 1972, when teachers were given training in human relations, interpersonal skills, and in communicating, problem solving and decision making. While training sessions for principals and teachers continued into the 1972-73 school year, the district began development of a "cost analysis management information system," that is, program budgeting.* The purpose of this third step was to provide for the coding of purchase orders for school programs. This allowed the district to determine how much money was being spent in each school program by grade level and by school building.

With program budgeting in place, the district's management system was reorganized in 1973-74. Decisions about the selection and purchase of textbooks, curriculum development, and discretionary funds expenditures, which had previously been made in the district's central office, were shifted to the school building level.

The fifth step involved further in-depth training for principals and leaders of the school management teams (school site councils). The teams themselves were organized with citizen members in 1975-76, and training continued after that for teachers and citizens on the teams.

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*Program budgeting is different from the more traditional line-item budgeting, in which budget requests are made on the basis of categories like supplies, personnel, and maintenance. In program budgeting, budget requests are made on the basis of programs, such as the school reading program, the bilingual program, the school lunch program and the resource room program. Program budgeting is useful in a decentralized management system.

The final step was taken in 1976-77, when training for all team members focused on planning, evaluation, curriculum development and auditing.

ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT OBJECTIVES OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHOOL BASED MANAGEMENT WAS TO REVERSE THE FLOW OF COMMUNICATIONS. THE CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF HAD PREVIOUSLY MADE CERTAIN DECISIONS AND NOTIFIED BUILDING PRINCIPALS OF THOSE DECISIONS. AFTER DECENTRALIZATION, THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS MADE DECISIONS AND WERE ACCOUNTABLE FOR THOSE DECISIONS THROUGH PROGRAM AUDITING AND EVALUATION REPORTS SUBMITTED TO THE CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF.

Dr. Henriquez summarized the Monroe County experience with school based management by stating that "if you really believe the principal is the key change agent, if you really believe the principal is on the firing line and that's where the action is, then you have to support the principal in all ways."*

Legislation for Change

The Florida legislature passed laws during its 1973 session which required the implementation of a number of these elements of school based management. The concerns expressed by the Citizens' Committee, which led to this legislation, were developed around the issue of how power is spread throughout the school system and how parents can share in influencing the operation of their schools.

Charles Reed, director of Planning, Budgeting and Evaluation for the Florida Department of Education, has stated that two very important factors influenced the 1973 legislation.** These were 1) the ripe political

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*From Henriquez presentation at NCCE Conference in Denver, September, 1978.

**From Reed presentation at NCCE Conference in Denver, September, 1978.

climate for educational change encouraged by Governor Askew in 1970, and 2) the recognition that such far-reaching changes required a solid legal base.

School Building Accountability. These two factors resulted in the legislative mandate that the school building should become the unit of educational accountability. The legislature believed that the school building is the largest unit in which change and improvement have been made effectively.

In the Florida Statutes, Section 555-1(b) of Chapter 229 states:

> "The major emphases of the system shall be upon locally determined goals and objectives, the state's plan for education, and the minimum performance standards developed by the Department of Education.
>
> The system shall be structured to meet the specific management needs of the district. The system of planning and budgeting shall insure that the budget adopted by the district school board reflects the plan the board has also adopted.
>
> Each district school board shall utilize its system of planning and budgeting to emphasize a system of school-based management in which individual school centers become the principal planning units and eventually to integrate planning and budgeting at the school level."

School Advisory Committees. Section 58 of Chapter 229, passed in 1973, allows a district to establish school building advisory committees and mandates the establishment of a district wide advisory committee if school advisory committees are not organized.

The advisory committees are made up of teachers, parents, other

citizens and high school students. The committees perform functions delegated by the district school board. They must participate in preparing the school's annual report, and they assist the principals in preparing an annual budget and program plan.

How Is It Working?

Since the 1973 legislation was passed, school based management has been implemented in many Florida school districts. Progress has been slow and problems have surfaced along the way, but the move toward decentralized decision making continues.

In Dade County, the major change has been the shift in the method of allocation so that discretionary fund allocations are now made at the school building level.* There, decisions have involved trade-offs of teachers for teacher aides, materials for personnel and counselors for teachers.

The school management teams have also worked on a special reward system for energy conservation and teacher substitute management. The energy conservation system provides the school unit a rebate equal to 80% of the dollar value of energy saved in the school building, based on an average of the last few years. The teacher substitute system operates on exactly the same basis.

Both systems are working; for example, Dade County saved $600,000 in 1977-78 on energy expenditures. Eighty percent of that money was rebated to school management teams to be used for discretionary budget items.

THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL ADVISORY COMMITTEES HAS BEEN CRITICAL IN THIS AREA, ACCORDING TO SUPERINTENDENT BECKHEM. SHE BELIEVES THAT THE ADVISORY COMMITTEES HAVE PLAYED A MAJOR ROLE IN MOVING THESE EFFORTS FORWARD AND IN MAINTAINING A SOUND PROCEDURE FOR SCHOOL LEVEL ALLOCATION DECISIONS.

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*Presentation by Ethel Beckhem, Superintendent of Dade County, at Denver Conference, September, 1978.

CHAPTER 229.58 DISTRICT AND SCHOOL ADVISORY COMMITTEES. --

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.--THE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD MAY ESTABLISH AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE BROADLY REPRESENTATIVE OF THE COMMUNITY SERVED BY THE SCHOOL FOR EACH SCHOOL IN THE DISTRICT AND COMPOSED OF TEACHERS, STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND OTHER CITIZENS. IF THE SCHOOL BOARD DOES NOT ESTABLISH ADVISORY COMMITTEES FOR EACH SCHOOL, IT SHALL ESTABLISH A DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE BROADLY REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DISTRICT AND COMPOSED OF TEACHERS, STUDENTS, PARENTS AND OTHER CITIZENS. THE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD MAY ESTABLISH, IN ADDITION TO THE COMMITTEES AUTHORIZED AT EACH SCHOOL, A DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE WHICH MAY BE COMPRISED OF REPRESENTATIVES OF EACH SCHOOL COMMITTEE OR SUCH OTHER MEMBERS AS THE DISTRICT BOARD SHALL PRESCRIBE. RECOGNIZED SCHOOLWIDE SUPPORT GROUPS WHICH MEET ALL CRITERIA ESTABLISHED BY LAW OR RULE MAY FUNCTION AS DISTRICT AND SCHOOL ADVISORY COMMITTEES.

(2) DUTIES.--EACH ADVISORY COMMITTEE SHALL PERFORM SUCH FUNCTIONS AS ARE PRESCRIBED BY REGULATIONS OF THE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD; HOWEVER, NO ADVISORY COMMITTEE SHALL HAVE ANY OF THE POWERS AND DUTIES NOW RESERVED BY LAW TO THE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD. EACH SCHOOL ADVISORY COMMITTEE, HOWEVER, SHALL ASSIST IN THE PREPARATION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT REQUIRED BY S 229.575 AND SHALL PROVIDE SUCH ASSISTANCE AS THE PRINCIPAL MAY REQUEST IN PREPARING THE SCHOOL'S ANNUAL BUDGET AND PLAN AS REQUIRED BY S 229.555(1).

- FLORIDA LAW, CHAPTER 229, 1973
"FUNCTIONS OF STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES"

Statewide Assessment. The Select Joint Committee on Public Schools was formed by the Florida State Legislature in 1977 to conduct an evaluation of educational reform since the 1973 legislation. The committee obtained grants from the legislature, the Ford Foundation and the National Conference of State Legislatures. It used the grants to contract with eleven educational experts to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the reforms. These experts came from five state universities, the Institute for Responsive Education*, and a private management consulting firm.

The team of experts found that the 1973 legislation is sound, but its implementation is uneven. Over 70% of school districts had established school advisory committees by 1977, but 65% of citizens and teachers on the committees were appointed by school administrators rather than elected by the groups they were representing.

The study team found that there are continuing problems with membership, representativeness and effectiveness of the committees. These problems were found to be caused by three negative factors:

1) the legislature's intent to shift decision making to the school building level had not been widely publicized or disseminated;
2) additional funding and personnel had not been provided for training, support of school management teams and dissemination of relevant information; and
3) the school advisory committees had not been delegated enough power and authority to share in decision making.

The team's final evaluation report, submitted in February, 1978**, was lengthy. It included fifty recommendations for further improvement, five of which are worth noting here.

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*IRE is a Boston based, non-profit education organization, whose purpose is to study and assist citizen participation in educational decision making.

**Improving Education in Florida: A Reassessment. Consultant's Report to Select Joint Committee, Tallahassee, February, 1978.

The team recommended that the legislature empower school advisory committees to participate in the selection of school principals. This move would give teachers and citizens a stronger role in school management. The committees would set criteria for selection, interview candidates and submit a list of finalists in rank order to the district school board.

The team also recommended that the committees participate in developing proposals for special state grants. The committees had been responsible for endorsing these proposals; their participation in writing the proposals could lead to better planning and understanding.

The evaluation team looked closely at the role of the Department of Education in implementing the 1973 laws. The team concluded that the department had not taken a major role in providing technical assistance to school districts struggling to implement new management and budgeting systems. The team recommended that the Department of Education develop plans and technical assistance programs to better implement school based management in school districts.

Another recommendation was that the department take a leadership role in facilitating and coordinating institutional and systemwide reform. The department could 1) provide training to specialists who would assist in implementing school based management throughout Florida, 2) identify educational service teams to work with school districts, 3) identify other educational resources and services in the state, and 4) inform citizens about the legislative process, proposed bills and analyses of legislation.

The team identified as a major obstacle the mis-interpretation of laws governing the authority of local school boards to delegate responsibility. Under current Florida law, "limited responsibility" may be delegated by local boards to principals, teachers and parents. The report recommends that the statutes be clarified, because they do not specify which decision making powers may be delegated. The team also recommended that principals have wide latitude for decision making in light of unique characteristics of a given school.

Despite these obstacles to successful reform, the evaluation report was concluded on an optimistic note: "THE PROSPECTS ARE EXCELLENT FOR FURTHER EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 1973 LEGISLATION, STRENGTHENING THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, PERFECTING A SYSTEM OF LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT, AND INVOLVING CITIZENS FUNDAMENTALLY IN EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS AT STATE AND LOCAL LEVELS."

CALIFORNIA - SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Background: A Supportive Political Climate

School site management was introduced in California during the mid-seventies, and became law with the passage of Assembly Bill 65 - The School Improvement Program - in 1977. The provisions of the new education law were based on California's experiences with its innovative Early Childhood Education program (ECE), its Educationally Disadvantaged Youth (EDY) program, and the 1975 recommendations of the California Commission for Reform of Intermediate and Secondary Education (RISE).

As early as 1971, individual school districts in California were studying the feasibility of decentralized school district management.*

THE POINT OF THIS GROWING FOCUS ON DECENTRALIZATION WAS TO PLACE INSTRUCTIONAL DECISION MAKING AS CLOSE TO THE LEARNER AS POSSIBLE.

As more school districts experimented with decentralization — alternative resource allocation, governance and management schemes — their activities were brought to the attention of California's governor, Jerry Brown. In 1975, Governor Brown expressed a strong interest in transferring decision making authority from the school district level to the school site. The following year, San Francisco school superintendent Robert Alioto proposed to redesign the governance of the city's school system by shifting to school site management. He stressed the importance of staff and community involvement and increased accountability.

Michael Kirst, president of the California State Board of Education, and education professor at Stanford University, has favored more flexibility at the school site. He has written: "We need to establish school

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*The school decentralization movement began in New York City. It was an outgrowth of the 1967 "Bundy Report," which was developed by a blue-ribbon mayor's panel and which recommended the decentralization of the New York City school system. For a history and analysis of that movement, see Fantini, Gittell, and Magat, Community Control and the Urban School, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970).

THE RELEVANT RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE RISE COMMISSION WERE:

1) TO INVOLVE LEARNERS, PARENTS, STAFF AND OTHERS IN THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS AT THE LOCAL AND SCHOOL SYSTEM LEVEL, INCLUDING INVOLVEMENT IN THE SELECTION AND REVIEW OF STAFF.

2) TO MAKE BROAD AND EFFECTIVE USE OF HUMAN AND PHYSICAL RESOURCES IN THE COMMUNITY AND THE USE OF INCENTIVES TO PROMOTE SUCH COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION.

3) TO SUPPORT AN AGGRESSIVE PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAM TO KEEP THE PUBLIC AND STAFF INFORMED OF MATTERS INVOLVING THE SCHOOL SYSTEM, THE SCHOOL AND THE COMMUNITY.

SOURCE - REPORT OF THE CALIFORNIA COMMISSION FOR REFORM OF INTERMEDIATE AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

33

governance mechanisms that will blunt...centralization trends without repealing progress in equal rights...A promising approach is school site decision making and instruction. It retains essential policy matters (e.g., desegregation policy) at the central office...,but parents and staff at each school site would have increasing control over budget, personnel and curriculum."*

In 1975 and 1976, the Association of California School Administrators and the California Association of School Business Officials studied the issue of decentralization and outlined the pros and cons of implementing it. They testified along with other education associations before the California State Board of Education in 1976. The presenters generally agreed with the potential benefits of decentralized decision making. However, they cautioned against abuses which could affect accountability, professional evaluation, rights of school personnel, and adherence to state and federal regulations.

The District Master Plan and School Site Councils

The School Improvement Program was legislated in 1977; it was California's formal response to the State Supreme Court's mandate to reform the state school finance system.**

The primary component of the new program is a District Master Plan, which provides a framework for district planning, implementation and evaluation of efforts to improve school programs. The law also clarifies the roles and responsibilities of those in the districts who will develop the Master Plan. These persons are members of School Site Councils; each School Site Council contributes to the development of the District Master Plan.

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*See The Generator (AERA Division G Newsletter), Summer, 1977.

**Serrano vs. Priest, 18 Cal. 3d 728, 557 P. 2d 929 (1976). (The first decision in the case was made by the California Supreme Court in August, 1971. Appeals procedures extended the case through 1976.)

The first four elements of the District Master Plan must be:

1. Procedures for providing information about school improvement.
2. Policies for School Site Councils.
3. Policies regarding responsibilities of School Site Councils.
4. Procedures for School Site Councils in developing and updating the District Master Plan.

The Master Plan must also describe the form and extent of participation by classroom teachers and other school personnel, administrators, parents and community members in developing and updating the plan (EC 52034(b)), in order to "ensure that (it) is keyed to the school improvement objectives of participating schools (EC52034(c))."

The California Department of Education provides more detailed guidelines for implementing the requirements of the School Improvement Program.* In its guidebook for establishing school site councils, the department emphasizes the need for a systematic means of maintaining organized communication between school boards and school site councils. Principals are advised to inform teaching staff and the community, through public forums, local media, and letters and meetings, about the education law and its intent and implications.

THE GUIDEBOOK ALSO OUTLINES THE MEMBERSHIP OF SCHOOL SITE COUNCILS. THE MAKE-UP OF THE COUNCILS MUST INCLUDE HALF SCHOOLPEOPLE AND HALF PARENTS. THE MAJORITY OF SCHOOLPEOPLE MUST BE TEACHERS. SELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE COUNCILS MAY BE DONE THROUGH ELECTION, APPOINTMENT BY THE GROUP TO BE REPRESENTED (NEVER BY THE PRINCIPAL OR OTHER SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR), OR APPROVAL OF VOLUNTEERS BY THE GROUP TO BE REPRESENTED. EACH MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL HAS ONE VOTE, AND DECISIONS ARE MADE BY THE MAJORITY VOTE.

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*Establishing School Site Councils, 1977.

The major task of the school site council is to develop a School Improvement Plan. (This is not the same as the District Master Plan, which is a districtwide planning document developed with the participation of school site councils.) For the School Improvement Plan, a school site council must:

1. decide what competencies and abilities students should achieve;
2. assess the school program to determine if these competencies and abilities will be taught;
3. develop a plan to improve school programs; and
4. design a system to monitor and evaluate the improvement plan.

How Is It Working?

It may be difficult for California to assess the effectiveness of its School Improvement Program. Although the school districts must submit parts of the District Master Plan to the State Department of Education, they are not required to submit the School Improvement Plan. The state will have to go out to the school districts to study the improvement plans and to assess their effectiveness. Also, since the first district master plans were to be submitted on July 1, 1978, the districts have only had one school year in which to begin their improvement programs.

Dr. Charlie Mae Knight, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction for the California State Department of Education, assessed the state's experience with school site management in April, 1978.* She said that the school site councils, which were organized prior to the 1977 law under the Early Childhood Education Program for grades K-3, are implementing and evaluating school programs. They are very successful in middle income school districts due to efforts of organized citizen groups. In urban areas, councils have been more successful where federal programs such as Head Start and Follow-Through have familiarized citizens with the participatory process.

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*Urban Education Conference, New Brunswick, New Jersey, April, 1978.

Dr. Knight warned that councils can be destructive if teachers and parents set up coalitions which consistently oppose the judgment of the school principal. She said, "We must have an exceptional principal at the school site, so I'm working closely with those administrators." She countered her warning with the positive conclusion that school boards, especially elected boards, are ill-advised to act against the interests of parents and teachers who make decisions in school site councils.

SOUTH CAROLINA: SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCILS

The South Carolina Education Finance Act of 1977 requires that every school building have a school advisory council (Section 6). The councils must have at least two parents, two teachers, and two high school students (on high school councils), who are elected by the groups they represent. The principal may also appoint up to one-third of the council members.

The law states that the role of the school advisory councils is to assist in the preparation of the Annual School Report. An interesting provision of the law is that the council may submit its own report to the school board if it believes the official school report is inadequate or incorrect.

The Annual School Report describes the existing school program, defines goals and objectives for the next school year, states student needs, recommends program improvements and sets budget priorities.

How Is It Working?

By January, 1978, all but one school district had established a school advisory council. The fast implementation of the new law, according to a study done by the Institute for Responsive Education*, is the result of an organized citizens coalition effort to spread information about the 1977 law, and to help train parents and even schoolpeople to implement the law.

The Citizens Coalition had been a primary influence in getting the new law passed. The coalition had organized in 1973, and included such groups as the League of Women Voters (LWV), the American Friends Service Committee, the NAACP, other citizen advocacy groups, and the state teachers union. Although the State Department of Education and the State School Boards Association did not join the coalition, they acted as consultants to it.

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*Overcoming Barriers to School Council Effectiveness, 1979.

In 1974, the new governor of South Carolina, James Edwards, formed a Citizens Task Force to study school finance reform. Four of the ten groups in the coalition were represented on the governor's task force. The recommendations of the task force were used as the basis for the new education law in 1977.

The efforts of the coalition were important because they forced a discussion of the problems in school finance, and because they were based on the cooperation of different groups which are not ordinarily on the same side of an issue. This cooperation served to speed up and ease the implementation of the new law.

The Legislative Oversight Committee of the South Carolina Legislature is expected to submit a report, by the end of 1979, about the effectiveness of the law. The committee has mailed questionnaires to all principals and to a random sample of school advisory councils. It also requested from each local school board a copy of the advisory council's policies and lists of council members.

The LWV is also conducting an "information observation project" to get detailed reports about a selection of individual school councils. Their reports are also due in 1979.

NCCE DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

The C. S. Mott Foundation of Michigan, which has a special interest in community education, funded an 18 month project of the National Committee for Citizens in Education (NCCE) in March, 1978. The purpose of the NCCE project was to introduce school site management in different regions of the country, and to demonstrate how it can work.

NCCE selected six school districts as study sites. These sites vary in operation; NCCE is keeping track of how they vary and what differences result.

THREE MAJOR CRITERIA WERE USED FOR SELECTION OF THE DEMONSTRATION SITES. THESE WERE: 1) THE DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT MUST BELIEVE IN DECENTRALIZED MANAGEMENT; 2) THE SCHOOL BOARD MUST SUPPORT THE SUPERINTENTENDENT IN PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING DECENTRALIZED MANAGEMENT; AND 3) THE PRINCIPALS IN SELECTED SCHOOL BUILDINGS MUST HAVE HISTORIES OF REACHING OUT FOR TEACHER, PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT.

Using these criteria, and following up on information about school districts which were already working on some form of decentralized management, NCCE selected these six districts:

Littleton, Colorado	Eugene, Oregon
Wilmington, Delaware	Coventry, Rhode Island
Burtinsville, Maryland	Salt Lake City, Utah

Two of these projects, in Eugene and Salt Lake City, are described here.

Salt Lake City

At the NCCE seminar on school site management in 1978, several of the schoolpeople working at the demonstration sites presented updates of their progress. Don Thomas, Superintendent of the Salt Lake City School District, said his school board adopted a "shared governance policy" and

established "school governance councils" at each school. The councils are made up of the building principal, the PTA president and vice-president, and six other PTA members who represent all geographic regions assigned to a school building. Seven teachers are elected by the teachers. Decisions are made by consensus, and both "sides" (i.e., the schoolpeople and the PTA members) must agree to a decision. (This eliminates vote packing, according to Thomas.)

The superintendent and central administration set basic objectives for attendance and achievement which must be attained by each school. The governance councils work to achieve these objectives, and also decide on budget expenditures (of discretionary funds) and curriculum policy, within the bounds of school board policy and the law.

The Salt Lake City governance councils have unusual authority, which the superintendent believes is improving school programs. He explained that the councils "can make a judgment as to whether or not a teacher should be placed on remediation and be observed by central office people. A special assistance team goes into a building and then decides if that teacher is providing sufficient services. Eighty teachers have been placed on remediation in a five year period; forty teachers have been terminated through that process." Thomas said the strongest members of the assistance team have always been the teachers, who are colleagues chosen by the teacher on remediation. These fellow teachers have been able to convince the teacher on remediation to resign if it is apparent the teacher is not improving.

Eugene

In Eugene, the school district has never actually used the term "school site management;" however, the school board there made a policy commitment to decentralized management in 1974. With that policy, Superintendent Tom Payzant reorganized the district into four regions and appointed a "generalist superintendent" in each region.

Also in 1974, Oregon implemented a modified program budgeting system which allowed for decentralized budgeting. The budget was allocated to

schools within each district in lump sums, except the salary budget, which was already allocated.

During the same period, the alternative school movement developed.* The movement involved parents, teachers, administrators and students in joint decision making about the school program. This created a climate receptive to school site management.

Although each school in Eugene has a citizen advisory council, the councils are not included in shared decision making. The councils have only been active when problems arise. To this extent, Eugene's project can only be partially considered school site management.

The NCCE has applied for an 18 month renewal grant so it can continue to provide technical assistance to the six projects, start three new demonstration sites, evaluate all nine sites, and hold a conference for participants in the demonstration projects in 1980. NCCE has also started developing a clearinghouse capacity for collecting materials on school site management.

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*Alternative schools were started frequently in the mid-seventies. In the public school system, they were designed to offer an alternative learning program for students who did not do well in the regular schools.

PART III

CAN IT HAPPEN IN NEW JERSEY? (YES)

ONE CLAUSE IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION ACT OF 1975 MAKES SCHOOL SITE MANAGEMENT A POSSIBILITY IN NEW JERSEY. THAT CLAUSE, N.J.S.A. 18A:7A-2(6), STATES:

> "A THOROUGH AND EFFICIENT SYSTEM OF EDUCATION INCLUDES LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN WHICH DECISIONS PERTAINING TO THE HIRING AND DISMISSAL OF PERSONNEL, THE CURRICULUM OF THE SCHOOLS, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DISTRICT BUDGETS, AND OTHER ESSENTIALLY LOCAL QUESTIONS ARE MADE DEMOCRATICALLY WITH A MAXIMUM OF CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT AND SELF-DETERMINATION..."

This provision has not yet been seriously implemented by the State Board of Education and the State Department of Education. It has not been seriously monitored by the legislature and most citizens. However, due to the continued efforts of groups like Schoolwatch, the N.J. Association of Citizens for Education, the Citizens Union for Public Schools, and other reform groups, the potential of citizen involvement is becoming more of a reality.

For example, in late 1979, school councils were introduced as part of a revision to the regulation which requires the classification of all schools and districts as either approved, approved with conditions, or unapproved. The proposal required the establishment of school improvement councils only in schools or districts with severe educational problems. As of this date, the board has not passed the regulation; however, it has expressed its intention to take the concept of school councils out of

classification with its negative implications and investigate all aspects of school councils in a more positive framework.

The State Department of Education has established an Office of Citizen Information, which will be staffed to respond to citizen inquiries and phone requests, and to refer citizens to appropriate sources of information. The department has also recently revised its regulations to require disclosure of school information through public meetings. The state board organized a series of public hearings for July, 1979 to obtain public opinion about the effectiveness of the Public School Education Act of 1975. These events indicated that organized citizens' interest groups in New Jersey are being recognized.

The Education Law

THE EDUCATION STATUTES IN NEW JERSEY IDENTIFY THE SCHOOL DISTRICT AS THE BASIC UNIT OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM. ALTHOUGH THE STATUTES DO NOT REFER TO UNITS SMALLER THAN SCHOOL DISTRICTS, THEY NEITHER MANDATE NOR PROHIBIT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SMALLER ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS.

Most the the responsibilities for operating the public school system are delegated to the school districts by the legislature. Local boards of education, which govern and manage the school districts, are responsible for enforcing the rules of the State Board of Education. They must:

1. "Make, amend and repeal rules, not inconsistent with this title or with the rules of the state board, for its own government and the transaction of its business and for the government and management of the public school and public school property of the district and for the employment, regulation of conduct and discharge of its employees;"
2. "Perform all acts and do all things, consistent with the law and the state board, necessary for the lawful and

proper conduct, equipment and maintenance of the public schools of the district." (Title 18A:11-1)

The statutes also specify certain activities for which local boards are responsible. These include:

1. preparation of an annual school district budget (18A:22-7);
2. preparation of a report on pupil enrollments in categorical programs for state school aid (18A:7A-17);
3. submission of the annual school budget to the commissioner (18A:7A-28);
4. establishment of educational goals, objectives and standards, and development of a basic skills improvement plan (18A:7A-7);
5. selection, purchase and maintenance of textbooks and school supplies (18A:27-10);
6. employment of teaching staff members, determination of their salaries, and evaluation of non-tenured staff (18A:27-3);
7. regulation of employment, terms and tenure of employment, promotion and dismissal, and salaries of teaching staff members (18A:27-4);
8. preparation of written contracts of employment for teaching staff members (18A:27-5); and,
9. preparation of written notices for continued employment or termination of non-tenured teaching staff members by April 30 (18A:27-10).

The New Jersey Administrative Code (N.J.A.C.), which has the force of law, stipulates procedures for implementing the statutes. The education code requires local boards to perform such tasks as writing an educational plan (N.J.A.C. 6:8-3.1), adopting an education program (6:8-3.5), developing policies for pupil promotion and graduation (6:8-4.2), providing orientation and information about the schools to parents (6:8-4.6), writing an annual school district report (6:8-6.1) and evaluating

tenured teaching staff (6:3-1.21). All of these tasks are performed in order to carry out the law.

Local school boards are also subject to the requirements of the Public Employment Relations Act, amended by Chapter 123, Public Law 1974. This act prohibits public employers, including school boards, from refusing to negotiate in good faith with employee organizations. The law specifies procedures for settling labor disputes and the responsibilities of a state-level Public Employee Relations Commission (PERC).

AS AN ADMINISTRATIVE AGENCY OF THE STATE, THE LOCAL BOARD OF EDUCATION MAY DELEGATE RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN CERTAIN LIMITS, BASED ON SPECIFIC STANDARDS, AND SUBJECT TO ITS INTERVENTION.

UNLESS THE LEGISLATURE IS PURPOSEFULLY RESTRICTIVE, AS IN THE STATUTES CITED ABOVE, THE LAW DOES NOT RESTRICT LOCAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION FROM SETTING UP SCHOOL SITE COUNCILS AND DELEGATING A VARIETY OF RESPONSIBILITIES TO THEM.

The local boards retain ultimate responsibility for governance and management of the school district, including auditing and monitoring. However, they may approve decisions by school site councils on expenditures of discretionary funds, and they may allow councils to review and recommend textbooks and instructional programs, to interview and recommend candidates for building principal and other school personnel positions, to participate in developing the school district's annual report, to develop goals and standards, to evaluate school programs, and to establish school building policies which are consistent with state and local policies.

It is clear that nothing in the education law prohibits the implementation of school site management in New Jersey's school districts. The overriding obstacles to school site management, then, are not legal. Obstacles may be caused by ignorance of the school site management movement,

fear of change, public apathy, or resistance to increased teacher and citizen participation.

Encouraging Initiative

The most straightforward way to initiate school site management is to pass legislation that requires it. In California and Florida, where legislation has been passed, school site management is being implemented -- slowly --, despite the resistance of many local school administrators, and despite the apathy of much of the citizenry. In South Carolina, school advisory councils were established immediately.

If the State Board of Education is committed to school site management and is prepared to overcome resistance at the local level, it can write regulations requiring school site management. If school district officials are committed to it, they can implement it without new legislation. Although there is some indication that the state board may be interested in site management, it will probably not move in this direction without substantial study and technical assistance.

The state board is apparently reluctant to impose governance regulations on local districts because it is committed to local control. This commitment, however, may be hindering its encouragement of increased local control. Local school officials tend to be threatened by the implications of school site management rather than enthused by its possibilities. They may not realize that the delegation of specific responsibilities does not decrease their authority over broad financial and policy matters. They may also not realize that when citizens are actually involved in decision making, they are less likely to point accusing fingers at board members and school administrators.

These factors should not discourage advocates of school site management. While citizens' interest groups attempt to have legislation passed at the state level, citizens in local districts may encourage movement toward site management. The steps they might take, which can occur over a number of years, can be progressively rewarding.

"THE MAJOR ORGANIZATIONAL BARRIERS ENCOUNTERED BY COUNCILS ARE: LACK OF COMPREHENSIVENESS OF COUNCIL'S SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES, LACK OF INTERNAL DEMOCRACY, AND LACK OF AWARENESS OF STRATEGIES FOR GROUP PROBLEM SOLVING, CONFLICT RESOLUTION, DIVISION OF LABOR; ALL OF THESE OFFSET COUNCIL'S ABILITY TO TAKE ACTION."

- SOURCE: OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO SCHOOL COUNCIL EFFECTIVENESS
INSTITUTE FOR RESPONSIVE EDUCATION

WHAT CITIZENS CAN DO

CITIZENS HAVE THE POWER TO TAKE A NUMBER OF DIRECTED STEPS TO INTRODUCE SCHOOL SITE MANAGEMENT. THESE STEPS REQUIRE, IN THE BEGINNING, A RECOGNITION THAT INDIVIDUALS MUST MOVE FROM THE ROLE OF PASSIVE CITIZEN TO THAT OF ACTIVE CITIZEN. THESE STEPS REQUIRE INITIATIVE AND PERSISTENCE. AND ALWAYS, THEY ARE TAKEN WITHIN THE PARAMETERS OF A CITIZEN'S RIGHTS IN THE SCHOOL DISTRICT. THE TEN SUGGESTED STEPS ARE:

1. KNOW YOUR RIGHTS.
2. GET INFORMATION.
3. UNDERSTAND SCHOOL SITE MANAGEMENT.
4. GET CITIZEN SUPPORT.
5. INITIATE DISCUSSION.
6. LEARN TO DEAL WITH OPPOSITION.
7. PROPOSE IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES.
8. OFFER TO ASSIST IN ORGANIZING COUNCILS.
9. DISTRIBUTE A MONTHLY "UPDATE" BULLETIN.
10. KEEP YOUR LEGISLATORS INFORMED.

1) KNOW YOUR RIGHTS.

As citizens and taxpayers, you have legal access to public school information, and you may attend all school board meetings, except "executive sessions" which may be called only for specific purposes. These rights are delineated in the law, specifically in Title 18A, which deals with education, in the "Open Public Meetings Act," which is commonly known

as the "sunshine law," and in the Right To Know Law.

A number of publications explain these laws and the rights granted under them. The publications are listed in the "Resources" section of this handbook.

2) GET INFORMATION.

As Thomas Jefferson said, "knowledge is power." People with information tend to be influential, and those without information are usually helpless. In order to be most effective, and most influential, in moving toward school site management, citizens must have information about the school district.

- Know the law. The Public School Education Act of 1975 (Chapter 212) and the Administrative Code, which has the effect of law, are printed in a pamphlet by the State Department of Education. Copies of the "T & E Primer," as it is commonly known, are available for a small fee at the regional Educational Improvement Centers (in Princeton, Sewell, East Orange and Cedar Knolls), from the department in Trenton, and from Schoolwatch. The most updated editions have been printed since November, 1978. You should obtain a copy and read it; it is interesting and informative.

  The primer does not contain all of the education laws. These may be found in three volumes of New Jersey Statutes under Title 18A, which deal specifically with education. These volumes should be in your local library or in the district school board office.

- Know the issues. Attend school board meetings, and follow carefully the discussions about each item on the agenda.

  Usually, the most controversial issues do not appear on the school board agenda, although they are well covered in the local newspaper. Once you have become familiar with how board meetings are run, you will learn to 1) identify interesting pieces

of information buried in the Finance Committee or the Personnel Committee Reports, and 2) initiate board discussion about controversial issues covered in the press.

Call the school board office or secretary and ask to be placed on the mailing list. Be prepared to pay a small fee for this, which the board has a legal right to request. Ask what information is mailed in addition to meeting schedules and ask what information is available on request. Request it.

Request a copy of the school district's Annual Report, which must be submitted to the county superintendent's office by July 1 each year. It is a public document, and citizens have the right to get a copy. Again, the board may charge you up to 50 cents per page. Read it carefully. Mark sections which discuss areas of weakness in the district, and plans for improving them. Take note of the areas of strength.

Analyze the contents of these documents with other citizens. Try to determine 1) if the educational plan outlined in the Annual Report is logical, 2) if there are reasonable plans for eliminating problems identified by the county superintendent in the district's annual evaluation, and 3) if students requiring special education services or compensatory education have been identified and placed, etc.

- Know your school board. While you are attending school board meetings, observe and assess the behavior of each board member. Remember that the board is supposed to be representing you and your fellow citizens. Take note of how each member votes on the issues.

Find out if the board has appointed any citizen advisory groups to study special issues. For example, a school board might set up a special study group with citizen members to look into declining enrollments in the district. If there have been such groups, find out what they recommended in their

final reports. Then ask if the recommendations were ever implemented, and if not, why not.

Introduce yourself to the board members. Select two or three who you believe would be most responsive and make it a point to talk to them. Let them know you support them when they vote as you would have voted. Let them know you're out there.

- Know the school superintendent. The role of the school district superintendent is very influential, particularly in relation to the board of education. In many school districts, the superintendent has been there for several years. The board of education changes somewhat every year since members serve three year terms on a staggered basis. Superintendents are the chief policy advisors to and primary source of information for board members. With some justification, board members often defer to the professional judgment of their superintendent.

  Find out if the superintendent has tenure, and if not, when the tenure decision will be made. Try to learn how board members think about the superintendent.

- Know the building principals. Because the building principal's role will change the greatest under school site management, the principal's support is important to smooth implementation. Find out who the building principals are, how long they've been in their positions, and how long in the school district. Invite them to meet with small groups of interested citizens. If possible, try to meet some of them.

- Know the teachers. It is not possible to know all the teachers in the district, but there are certain kinds of information which would be helpful to you.

  Find out who the local teachers union leaders are. Read the most recent teacher contract (it is public information

after it has been approved); mark sections which seem to indicate their major concerns. Ask what percentage of teachers in the district belong to the union.

Talk to teachers you do know. Tell them about school site management and ask them if they would like to learn more about it.

Find out what the major concerns of the teachers are. Make a note of them because they can eventually become some of the first issues the school site councils discuss.

- Know the other citizens. Look around at school board meetings and take note of the other citizens attending. Introduce yourself. Exchange opinions about the issues the board is discussing.

  Find out who the district and school building PTA leaders are. What types of activities have they pursued? What goals or purposes do they have? Determine if they would be supportive of school site management.

3) UNDERSTAND SCHOOL SITE MANAGEMENT.

In order to convince your school board and superintendent that school site management is a worthwhile idea, you must be familiar with the concept and the various ways it can be implemented. Reading this handbook is a good start; if you want to read more, refer to the list of "Resources" in the last section. Most of them must be ordered through the mail, but the costs are low. You might also call or write to Schoolwatch for answers to your questions.

4) GET CITIZEN SUPPORT.

Once you have learned how the school system and the board of education operate, and you have made contacts with other parents and teachers, you can start to round up support for school site management. This process and step 5, initiating discussion, will probably go hand-in-hand.

However, before you approach the school board at a public meeting,

STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

1) DEVELOP EFFECTIVE TRANSITION PROCESS
2) DEVELOP DECENTRALIZED MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
3) DEVELOP WORK GROUP SKILLS
   - OPEN COMMUNICATION
   - CONFLICT/TENSION MANAGEMENT
   - PROGRAM PLANNING/ASSESSMENT
   - GROUP PROCESS SKILLS
4) TRANSITION ACTIVITIES
   A) GENERAL GOALS AND DEADLINES
   B) EXAMINE STATUS QUO IN SCHOOLS
   C) RAISE CONSIOUSNESS/BROADEN SUPPORT
   D) LOOK FOR IDEA PUSHERS/ENTHUSIASTS
   E) IDENTIFY TYPES OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED
   F) DEVELOP TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

- SOURCE: SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT
  FLORIDA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

you will want to know that some board members will be responsive, and that you have several other citizens supporting you. If they understand school site management also, you will have a stronger base with which to move along a discussion. It is much easier for a school board to dismiss the suggestion of an individual citizen than to ignore the request for discussion by a group of citizens and some board members.

It is also helpful to know that some of the district's teachers support the idea. With some support from each of these groups, the idea has a better chance of being discussed.

5) INITIATE DISCUSSION.

Ask to speak at a regularly scheduled board meeting and prepare to formally introduce the idea of school site management. Write a letter to the editor of the local newspaper. If possible, have copies of a brief summary of site management, including a definition, the components and how it works. Explain that you understand it is a viable governance structure, and that it is legally feasible for the board to delegate certain responsibilities. Suggest that the board appoint a task force or study group to look into school site management. Offer to discuss it in more detail with anyone who is interested.

One of the most difficult steps in introducing a major change in a system is getting people to understand and accept the change. Be ready to inform and work with board members and schoolpeople, so that they can understand it as well as you do. Remember that school site management is a major new process for most school districts so it will require a great deal of explanation, discussion and time. (Keep in mind that you can request technical assistance from Schoolwatch in pursuing these activities.)

If you believe people are responsive to the idea, you might suggest that a general meeting be held for interested citizens and schoolpeople. At that meeting, the school site management strategy could be explained in detail, and people would have time to ask questions or express opinions. The point is to get the concept known; this is a large part of the task.

SUGGESTIONS FOR EFFECTIVENESS

- When recruiting members for the council, clearly outline roles and functions.
- Continually identify concerns so that involvement will be genuine.
- Develop workable projects, creating a sense of accomplishment in meeting school/community needs.
- Maintain consistent, convenient, and well-publicized times and places for meetings. Set appropriate time limits.
- Plan agendas well and allow for widespread member input.
- Publicize council activities and projects in the community.
- Recognize and appreciate the work and efforts of council members.
- Encourage ongoing feedback and evaluation of school improvement projects and processes.

Source: ESTABLISHING SCHOOL SITE COUNCILS
California State Department of Education

You should keep in mind that there may be no recognized need to change the governance system. You will have to convince people that school site management is a better system. Read Part I of this document carefully and focus on the benefits of teacher and citizen participation in decision making.

A careful way to introduce school site management is to propose that a pilot program be started in one school building. Seek the cooperation of the principal and teachers in that building, and approach the superintendent as a group. Give the superintendent time to think about your request and to discuss it with the school board. When they have had time to learn about school site management, ask to discuss your proposal at a school board meeting. In this way, you are not surprising people with an unexpected request for change.

6) LEARN TO DEAL WITH OPPOSITION.

Opposition to school site management will probably be expressed by several groups. First, the school board might think that delegating responsibilities to school building councils will diminish its own power.

Although it is true that the board will give up certain responsibilities, it will be able to devote more serious attention to broader policy and monitoring responsibilities. If school site councils are making decisions about discretionary budget funds and school programs, the local board will be in a position to review council decisions and to approve expenditures. It will also advise councils when their decisions are not in compliance with the law. The school board will not have veto power over council decisions, except where they are clearly illegal or violate school board policies.

The board will also oversee the spending of discretionary funds in each school to ensure there are no abuses in spending. Finally, the board will retain its broad responsibilities for testing, auditing and review of all district programs.

The superintendent and central administration might oppose school

management because they believe they would lose influence and some responsibilities under a more decentralized system. However, they would remain responsible for most financial transactions, monitoring, and carrying out school board responsibilities. Planning functions would be delegated to site councils.

Principals may oppose the change for these same reasons. In fact, they have much to gain in a school site management system. Competent principals will view it as a rare opportunity to exert leadership and influence activities which are often suppressed by overriding directives from the central administration.

The teachers union might oppose school site management, even though teachers play a greater role on school site councils. The major reason for the union's attitude could be the great strides they have made in getting school boards to negotiate educational policies.* If school site councils operate effectively, teachers will no longer contend that such policy issues (like class size, staff evaluation, teacher transfer) must be negotiated at the bargaining table.

Also, if teachers share equally in decision making on a council with parents and the principal, they will have a fair influence on outcomes. This kind of cooperative settling of certain policy issues is more desirable than the more antagonistic discussion which usually takes place at the bargaining table.

The greatest obstacle to school site management could come from disinterested or passive parents who are resistant to changing the status quo. This is why it is so important to explain the concept, to generate discussion about it and to convince parents and citizens that it will result in a better learning environment for their children.

It is helpful to remember that a change to school site management will not eliminate conflict among the various interest groups in the school

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*You may recall, however, that the Ridgefield Park decision prohibited negotiation of educational and management policies.

district. It can, however, reduce conflict because it provides representatives of these interest groups with the opportunity to discuss issues and make decisions about them in a cooperative setting.

Learning to deal with opposition to a new idea and to prevent conflict are valuable skills. It is important not to take arguments personally and to avoid personal attacks on other people. It is most important to believe in the idea and to understand that it can result in better schools and programs.

7) PROPOSE IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES.

If and when the school board agrees to try school site management, it will probably want to do so on a trial basis. You might be prepared to suggest strategies for implementing it.

A reasonable way to begin is to establish school site advisory councils, made up of parents, teachers and administrators. The councils can begin to lay out guidelines for operation and general goals and objectives. They can start discussing specific problems in the school, such as high student absenteeism or low achievement test scores. This will give members a chance to meet each other, and to become comfortable with joint decision making.

This preliminary activity provides an opportunity to raise an issue which was identified as a problem area by the teachers during your initial talks with them. In one New Jersey school district survey, an overwhelming majority of teachers cited the severe lack of library space and library books in the elementary schools. A school site council might focus on this problem as a starting point. An open discussion of the problem could make the teachers realize how united they are in their felt need for one, and could make parents realize that they have the power to plan and act on a plan to set up a library. They might all decide it is a good way to spend some of the discretionary funds when they are available.

The outcome of working on such a worthy -- and less controversial -- issue is that the groups represented on the councils will learn they can

FOUR-YEAR PHASE-IN OF SCHOOL SITE COUNCILS

PHASE I: DEVELOP IMPLEMENTATION PLANS

A) BROADEN CONTROL OF PRINCIPALS

B) ESTABLISH PARENT ADVISORY COUNCILS

C) DEVELOP DECENTRALIZATION PLAN

D) ESTABLISH SITE MANAGEMENT POLICY

E) EXPERIMENT WITH DISCUSSION, REPORTING

F) DISCUSS ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

PHASE II: TRAIN SCHOOL PERSONNEL

A) RETRAIN PRINCIPALS TO BE STRONG LEADERS, GOOD MANAGERS, EXPERTS IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

B) RETRAIN TEACHERS IN CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRAM EVALUATION

PHASE III: ELIMINATE LEGAL BARRIERS

A) REVIEW STATE STATUTES AND REGULATIONS

B) REVIEW REGULATIONS ON TEACHER EMPLOYMENT AND ASSIGNMENT

C) DELEGATE SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES TO SCHOOL SITE COUNCILS

PHASE IV: ALLOCATE DISCRETIONARY FUNDS

A) DEVELOP ALLOCATION PROCESS

B) AUTHORIZE AND ADVISE COUNCILS ON EXPENDITURE PATTERNS

- LARRY PIERCE

IN SCHOOL SITE MANAGEMENT

60

work together cooperatively if they are given the structure, the procedures and the authority. They may also begin to realize that there are many issues about which they agree, and which can be easily solved in a participatory atmosphere.

8) OFFER TO ASSIST IN ORGANIZING COUNCILS.

Don't stop working now. Someone has to develop a system for selecting parent and citizen representatives and teacher representatives for the council. The teachers union is likely to take care of the selection of teachers, but there is not likely to be an organized citizens group to do this. Volunteer. Set up an election process or some other equitable system to find representatives for the council.

If the building principal is cooperating, be sure to work with him or her in setting up a first meeting and setting the agenda. Offer your help and leadership until the council has been organized and has met.

Many people are not willing to assume a leadership role. You may want to look around your community and find a parent or citizen who is inclined to assert leadership.

You can propose, too, that the school district include citizens and parents in its in-service activities for staff development.

You might reach out to organized citizens groups like Schoolwatch for technical assistance and training.

9) DISTRIBUTE A MONTHLY UPDATE NEWSLETTER.

Keep the people in the district informed; this is a significant part of school site management. An informed citizenry can ask questions, make suggestions, and generally influence the council's activities. A monthly newsletter is also a good way to keep the school board up to date, and is handy for distribution to other districts who may be implementing site management.

10) KEEP YOUR LEGISLATORS INFORMED.

If you can show your legislators that school site management is

working in your district, it will influence their attitudes about decentralized decision making and citizen participation in decision making. Their attitudes toward this can directly affect the way they vote on vital issues concerning public schools.

During the 1978-79 session, the New Jersey Legislature considered such issues as high school graduation standards, minimum basic skills, compensatory and special education programs and budgets, and violence and vandalism. Some of these concerns can be addressed most effectively at the school building level. If legislators believe this they will pass laws which either require or emphasize localized decision making and citizen participation.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT SCHOOL SITE MANAGEMENT

Most of the available information about school site management is printed in booklets and pamphlets. Although these documents cannot be purchased in book stores, they are generally accessible through the mail for small fees. Where possible, the address and cost of the document is listed with each source.

GENERAL RESOURCES

Apker, Wesley. "Potential Changes in School Governance," Phi Delta Kappan, October, 1978, pp. 91-94.

Kirst, Michael. "Local Initiative," The Generator, Summer, 1977 (available through Schoolwatch).

Lansing Michigan School District. "Community Involvement Committee Handbook," March, 1978 (available through Schoolwatch).

National Urban Coalition. "Partnerships in Educational Planning: Four Case Studies of School Site Management and Budgeting," 1201 Connecticut Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 (forthcoming, 1979).

National Urban Coalition. "School Based Management and Budgeting Systems: A Guide for Effective Implementation," Washington, D.C. (forthcoming, 1979).

Pierce, Lawrence. School Site Management. 1977. Aspen Institute, 360 Bryant Street, Box 1652, Palo Alto, California 94302 ($1.50). (A slightly revised version appears in School Finance - The Economics and Politics of Public Education (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1978), pp. 278-294.)

Stanton, Jim and Zerchykov, Ross. Overcoming Barriers to School Council Effectiveness. Institute for Responsive Education, 704 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, Mass. 02215, 1979 ($6.50).

(Note: Molnar and Popkewitz quotations in Part I are taken from the book Community Participation in Education, Carl Grant (Ed.), Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1979.)

LEGAL RIGHTS HANDBOOKS

A Parents Rights Handbook. M. Elaine Jacoby, Deborah Babcox, Advocates for Education, N.J., 1975, 67 pp. ($7.50). - Speaks to emerging package of rights to which parents are entitled.

The Rights of Parents in the Education of Their Children. David Schimmel, Louis Fischer, NCCE, 1975, 162 pp. ($3.50). - Tells parents what rights exist under law for them and their children.

Who Controls the Schools? Carl Marburger, NCCE, 1978, 76 pp. ($2.25). - Discusses power distribution among school board, administration, teachers, courts and governments.

N.J. Student Rights Manual. American Civil Liberties Union, 45 Academy Street, Newark, N.J. 07102, Fall, 1977.

The Rights of Students. Alan Levine, Eve Cary, American Civil Liberties Union, Avon Books, Mail Order Dept., 250 W. 55th St., New York, N.Y. 10019, 1977.

LAWS

The New Jersey Statutes Annotated are a series of hard-cover volumes containing all of the laws of New Jersey. These volumes should be in the reference section of your public library. They may also be read in the State Library in Trenton.

The Education statutes are contained in three volumes, marked Title 18A: 1 to 24, 18A: 25 to 65, and 18A: 66 to End. Of particular interest to the involved citizen is "The Public School Education Act of 1975" - Title 18A:7A-, which is in the Education volume, but is also printed in the "T&E Primer" by the State Department of Education.

"The Open Public Meeting Act" - Title 10:4.6-, which is found in the volume marked Title 9 to 10 Children - Civil Rights. (This law guarantees the right of the public to be present at all meetings of public bodies.)

"The Right to Know Act" - Title 47:1A -, which is found in the volume marked Title 46 to 47 Property - Public Records. (This law provides that public records shall be readily accessible for examination by the citizens of New Jersey.)

CALIFORNIA RESOURCES

(The following documents are all available from the California State Department of Education, P.O. Box 271, Sacramento, California 95802.)

"Discussion Guide for the California School Improvement Program," 1978 ($1.50).

"District Master Plan for School Improvement," 1978 ($1.50).

"Establishing School Site Councils: The School Improvement Program," 1977 ($4.50).

"Guide for Ongoing Planning," 1977 ($1.10).

"Planning Handbook," 1978 ($1.50).

"RISE Report," 1975 ($1.50).

"Site Management," 1977 ($1.50).

FLORIDA RESOURCES

Improving Education in Florida: A Reassessment, February, 1978, for Select Joint Committee on Public Schools, The Statehouse, Tallahassee, Florida, 32304 (No Charge).

"School Based Management," 1975, Florida State Department of Education, Tallahassee, Florida, 32304 (No Charge).

NCCE DEMONSTRATION PROJECT RESOURCES

For summary information, write: National Committee for Citizens in Education (NCCE) 410 Wilde Lake Village Green, Columbia, Maryland 21044 (301-997-9300).

SOUTH CAROLINA RESOURCES

(The following documents may be obtained by writing to: Mr. William Carson, Director, School Advisory Council Assistance

Project, College of Education, University of South Carolina, Columbia, South Carolina 29208 (803-777-7658).)

School Advisory Council Activity Guides, 1979:

"Assessing Needs"

"Budgeting for Schools"

"Clarifying School Advisory Council Roles"

"Communicating with the Community"

"Improving Communications within the Council"

"Interpreting and Using Test Results"

"Making Group Decisions"

"Setting Program Goals and Objectives"

"Surveying School and Community Opinions"

"Understanding and Assessing School Programs"

Local School Advisory Councils: How They Operate and What They Can Do to Improve Education. February, 1978.